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## KANSAS AGITATOR.

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### BLOODY TIMES AHEAD.

So Says the Rev. Hugh O. Pentecost in a Public Address.

The Rev. Hugh O. Pentecost, who preaches Sundays and edits the Twentieth Century week days, in a recent address read the "signs of the times" as follows:

In the sixteenth chapter of Matthew, the first verse, it is said that the Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus, tempting him. The Pharisees correspond almost exactly to our church members, and the Sadducees to our rich men who have thrown off religion without putting on the practice of justice and fraternity. Benjamin Harrison and John Wannamaker are typical Pharisees, Jay Gould and Chauncey Depew are typical Sadducees.

The Pharisees and Sadducees asked Jesus to show them a sign from heaven. Most men are more curious to see a miracle than to do what is fair and honest. The professed followers of Jesus to-day are more interested in the miracles he is reported to have wrought than in the wise maxims of conduct he is said to have uttered.

Jesus refused to work a miracle, and what he is reported to have said to his tempters is fair evidence that he was not and did not pretend to be a miracle worker. What he is reported to have said to the Pharisees and Sadducees is this:

When it is evening, ye say: "It will be fair weather; for the heaven is red." And in the morning: "It will be foul weather to-day, for the heaven is red and lowering." Ye know how to discern the face of the heaven, but ye cannot discern the signs of the times. An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given unto it,—but the sign of Jonah.

After saying this he turned on his heel and left them, staring after him.

What was the sign of Jonah? Jonah is one of the most famous characters in fictitious literature. He is the person who is said to have been swallowed by a fish and to have performed the remarkable feat of living for three days in the creature's stomach, being afterward thrown out by the fish on the beach, greatly to the relief, we may suppose, of the fish. This episode, however, does not, I think, constitute the sign to which Jesus referred. That sign, I think, is found in Jonah's subsequent history, which is not as well known as is his famous submarine experience.

Jonah was a prophet. He is said to have been sent by Jehovah to Ninevah, a city nearly as large as New York, to say that in forty days from the date of his arrival, the city, on account of its wickedness, would be destroyed. The king of Ninevah became alarmed and "covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes." He also commanded that man nor beast should eat or drink; that they, men and beasts, should be covered with sack-cloth and should "cry mightily unto God" and turn from their evil ways and cease their violence toward each other.

What wickedness the animals had been guilty of, or how they could "cry mightily unto God," or what was the necessity for covering them with sack-cloth and compelling them to fast, I do not know. I merely give you the story as it was told in the book of Jonah. Neither can I understand why Jehovah should be pleased because the king sat in ashes, but it appears from the story that he was, and that the threatened doom of the city was averted. Let us not miss the point of the story because of embellishments that are to us more or less absurd. The point of the story is that Ninevah was a city in which landlords and money lenders and other monopolistic robbers kept the working people very poor and consequently very degraded. The king was a tyrant, the nobles were parasites, the women were lewd, the poor were slaves. The natural outcome of this state of things was that Ninevah, by internal revolutions or external foes, was about to be destroyed. The king was wise enough to listen to Jonah and the other prophets, or cranks, within his dominions and change his course by establishing conditions from which happy results followed.

All these details are not told in the book of Jonah, but human nature is the same in all ages and like results follow like conditions in every time, so that we know what happened in Ninevah as well as if it had been told in the language of reason instead of in the language of superstition.

What Jesus meant, then, when he spoke to the Pharisees and Sadducees

was this: "You are an evil and adulterous generation. Your rich men are robbers; many of your women are debauched, your poor people are slaves. Go and read the story of Jonah's mission to Ninevah. If you mend your ways you will escape destruction. If you do not, your nation will be destroyed. You do not need a sign from heaven. You only need to exercise your common sense."

The Jews did not listen to Jesus, and their nation was overthrown. God did not destroy it. The people, by their great greed, their ignorance, their tyranny on the one hand and their submission on the other, brought it to ruin.

Thus Egypt under the Pharaoh of Exodus was destroyed. Thus Babylon was shattered. Thus Rome fell. Thus the monarchy in France foundered in blood. Thus the plutocratic Republic of the United States is tottering to ruin.

All the signs of the times indicate that before the sun rises on the first day of January, 1901, this nation will writhe and groan and scream in an agony of revolution; and that before five years have passed the streets of our great cities will be slippery with blood—a hundred drops of blood for each gem that flashes on the necks of the pampered women of the rich; ten drops of blood for each tear that has washed the face of poverty.

What are these signs of the times?

In the south every election of importance is carried at the muzzle of a gun. In the north the rich minority rule by boodle. In the south the rich minority rule by buckshot. In the north the poor are bribed to go to the polls and vote for the rich. In the south the poor are frightened away from the polls to make room for the rich. The Republicans of the north accuse the Democrats of the south of intimidating the poor. The Democrats of the south accuse the Republicans of the north of corrupting the poor. Both accusations are true. Politics in this country is so rotten that it stinks, and the worst of it is, not that it is so, but that everybody knows that it is so, but almost nobody cares. The pitiful cry of the Democrats after the recent election in Maine was that they did not have money enough to win. Everybody knows that in every election the party that can buy the most votes will succeed, and that whichever of the old parties wins the money lenders and corporations will rule the people for their own benefit.

The question is sometimes raised, whether our Republican form of government will fail. It has failed. This is not a republic. It is a plutarchy. We are ruled not from Washington but from Wall street; not from Albany but from the Grand Central railway station. Our

president is the creature of bank directors and protected manufacturers. He was elected by their money; he is the agent of their will. Our governors are the creatures of the railroads and coal mines. Our government officials, from the president to the Pinkerton detectives, are appointed by the rich, to look after the interests of the rich, although they are paid by taxes wrung from the poor.

And the hopelessness of the situation is that the poor, with few exceptions, approve of it. They whine about their poverty, they gnaw their crusts of bread and suck the marrow out of their soup-bones, but they may always be counted on to vote for the rich; and if a revolution were to break out to-morrow, with the object of getting justice done for the poor, nine-tenths of all the poor would shoulder muskets and lay down their lives in defense of the right of the rich to rob them.

Such a nation as ours; a nation in which one million plutocrats tyrannize over sixty million sullen slaves, if it is not overthrown by a foreign foe, or drowned in its own blood, will die of the gangrene.

I am no Jonah. I do not come to you as a messenger from Jehovah. I only utter the words of plain common sense, and each one of you knows that what I say is true.

Another sign of the times is this:

Laboring people can no longer hope to get justice done them through labor unions. To the clear thinker there never was any expectation that wage earners could get their own by merely combining, with the object of forcing monopolistic employers to pay them higher wages. This is the reason why the politicians who fish for the labor vote and the editors who bid for labor patronage contend for the right of laboring people to organize. They know that the union is perfectly harmless against the power of legal monopoly.

Monopolists are few, wise, cunning, and secretly and powerfully organized, they never quarrel with each other against their own interests. Vacant land owners, money lenders and managers of corporate monopolies constitute a more or less closely cemented conspiracy against honest wealth producers. They work into each other's hands, they vote together, they chip in money together to buy votes and lawmakers and judges. The administration may be Republican or Democratic, but in either case it administers in the interest of the banded monopolists. Congress or the legislature may be Republican or Democratic, but in either case it makes laws in the interest of the land owners, the bondholders, the stockholders, the noteholders, the charter owners, and the mortgagees. Sixteen thousand bills

(Concluded on last page.)